and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). No, Sir. There has been some delay due to unforeseen geological problems in the foundation of Piers 17 and 18 of the Brahmputra bridge which has delayed the completion of this project. The Railways also not been able to meet the full requirement of funds for this work.

The Jogighopa bridge is now expected to be completed by March 1997 along with Jogighopa-Goalpara section. The line for Goalpara to Guwahati is now targetted for completion in 1997-98.

[Translation]

Involvement of Multinational Companies

4051. SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to ban the entrance of multinational companies in the field of agricultural products so that the interest of the farmers is safeguarded;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposal; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. There is no proposal under consideration of the government at the moment to ban the entry of the multinational companies in the field of agricultural products.

[English]

IPS Officers Arrested

4052. SHRI DARBARA SINGH : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of IPS officers arrested/suspended during each of the last three years for the corrupt practices, State-wise; and

(b) the steps/precautions taken by the Union Government to put more vigilance on the working of these officers to root out the corruption?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected.

Contract Catering Employees

4053. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any memorandum from contract catering employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The General Secretary, Catering Contract Workers Union, Kerala, has submitted a memorandum to the Minister for Railways in regard to service conditions of the workers employed by catering contractors at Railway stations.

(c) The memorandum which was received in the third week of August, 1996 is being examined.

Task force to Check Pollution

4054. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Pollution Control Board has reiterated the need of setting up of a coordinated task force to check pollution and depletion of natural resources in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the assistance from voluntary organizations, State Pollution Control Boards and financial institutions has also been sought in this regard.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to set up the proposed task force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) and (b). The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has reiterated the need for setting up a Task Force to check pollution in the country during a Conference of Chairmen and Member Secretaries of Pollution Control Boards/Committees held at Delhi in February 1996.

(c) and (d). CPCB has set up a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Cell to involve the people and NGOs for abatement of pollution. The State Pollution Control Boards have also been advised to set up similar cells in their respective States. The initiatives taken to encourage public participation to control pollution include the following :

— A Pollution Awareness and Assistance Centre has been set up for priority participatory programmes on prevention and control of pollution;